

What is Project SEARCH?

Project SEARCH is a dedicated program focused on providing education and training to young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This is accomplished through an innovative workforce and career development model that benefits the individual, workplace, and community.

Our primary goal is to prepare each intern for competitive employment upon completion of this year long skill-building experience.

How is the program structured?

Project SEARCH has grown from one original program site at Cincinnati Children's Hospital in 1996, to over 400 host business sites across the United States and four countries.

Through a non-paid internship format, this one-year program follows an academic school year calendar and is geared towards 10-12 selected students who will be entering their last year of a transitional high school program*.

We are pleased to be partnering with **Central DuPage Hospital** who will be providing internship opportunities in multiple departments, learning various clerical, hospitality, supply distribution and equipment maintenance skills.

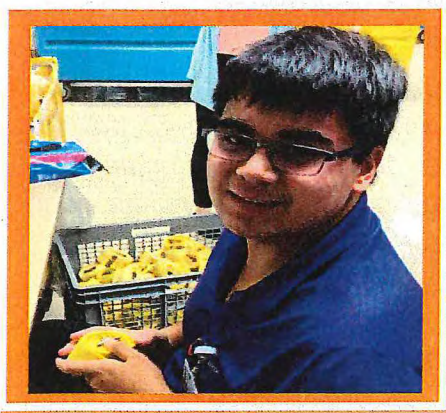
What are the benefits of participating in Project SEARCH?

Benefits to the Students:

- ❖ Acquire competitive, transferable and marketable job skills
- ❖ Gain increased independence, confidence, and self esteem
- ❖ Obtain work based individualized coaching, instruction and feedback
- ❖ Develop connections to Vocational Rehabilitation and other adult service agencies

Benefits to Northwestern Medicine:

- ❖ Access to a new, diverse, talent stream with skills that match labor needs
- ❖ Gain interns/employees with disabilities who serve as a role model for patients, visitors and staff
- ❖ Experience increased regional and national recognition through marketing of this unique program
- ❖ Performance and retention, in some high-turnover, entry-level positions, increases dramatically



*Selected student interns understand that Project SEARCH is an Opt-In program. Students agree that this will be the last year of services and students will accept their diploma at the end of the Project SEARCH program school year.

To further enhance the students total immersion in the workplace, there is an onsite classroom/work space at **CDH** that accommodates the selected 10 -12 students, a special education teacher (provided by our educational partners) and job coaches (provided by our educational and community rehabilitation partners) during the academic school year. Students participate in three, 10-week internships to explore a variety of career paths during this important transition from school to work experience.

Example Monday through Friday Schedule

- 7:45am Student & Staff Meeting: Employability Skills
- 9:00am-2:00pm Worksite Internship (includes lunch)
- 2:00pm Return to the classroom, review day and tomorrow's plan
- 2:45pm Depart

Project SEARCH is driven by a collaboration with the following community partners all centered on providing employment opportunities to students with disabilities:

- Project SEARCH graduates receive effective follow-along services to gain and retain employment after they complete this last transition year.
- Our goal is for 100% of our students to achieve employment within our community.



For more information about Project SEARCH:

<http://www.projectsearch.us/>

Business Testimonial: "Project Search breaks down stereotypes by increasing the public's expectations about people with significant disabilities. The Project Search program provides young people with significant disabilities the opportunity to contribute to their communities and to society at large by providing the necessary supports to work and receive minimum or prevailing wage. We are proud here at DOL to be the first Federal agency to embrace this program. This summer, we will hire several Project Search graduates at above **minimum wage.**"

- **Kathleen Martinez, Assistant Secretary for the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), Department of Labor, Washington, DC**

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